deal with terrorism in the context of Kashmir; and

(d) if so, to what extent this will help to check the terrorists activities in Jammu and Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERHANDES): (a) India and US have identified counter terrorism as an area of bilateral cooperation.

(b) to (d) It would not be possible to give further details in the interest of national security.

Exacting norms for defence purchase

2540. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that new norms for defence purchase are considered too rigid by representatives of defence industry as mentioned in the news-item "Defence purchase norms exacting" appeared in the Hindu of 17th March, 2002; if so, their objections; and

(b) what steps, if any, are proposed to be taken to relax the norms?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir. Government has not received any representation from the defence industry regarding the norms being rigid.

(b) There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to relax the norms.